

**FARMER FIRST REVISITED:  
FARMER PARTICIPATORY RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT  
TWENTY YEARS ON**

**Workshop Programme**

**Institute of Development Studies, University of Sussex,  
12-14 December 2007**

**Way Beyond Farmer First**

Following the opening session on Wednesday which will include a series of short scene setting presentations as opportunities to share materials/experiences in open space sessions, the Farmer First Revisited conference will focus on three broad themes, each made up of a set of parallel sessions: (1) Agricultural innovation systems – putting farmers first? (2) Organising agricultural research and development for the 21st century; and (3) Methodological innovation, personal and organisational change: looking to the future.

Papers submitted for this event will not be presented in plenary sessions, but will be posted on the dedicated Farmer First Revisited website ([www.farmer-first.org](http://www.farmer-first.org)). Thus, we need your cooperation in ensuring that all contributions reach us as soon as possible.

Discussants for clusters of papers have been asked to review the papers for their session in advance and offer a 10-minute summary of critical issues (preferably using PowerPoint), together with key points/questions for discussion, in plenary. Breakout groups will then convene around each set of papers for in-depth discussions, with a report back offered by rapporteurs (to be identified).

Please note that the title of your individual paper noted below is meant to be indicative of your topic and may not match exactly with the one you intend to use or have already submitted to us.

The final plenary will allow the strands of debate to be brought together (we hope) in a forward-looking discussion around new challenges and opportunities. And a final panel will offer initial thoughts on ways forward.

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*Please note: Lead paper authors who are not participating in person in this conference are designated with an asterisk (\*). In several such cases, co-authors will be present and are included in the list of participants.*

**Day 1 – Wednesday, 12 December**

10.00 Arrival and registration and setting up the exhibition space – an open space for posters, photographs, videos, slide shows and more, documenting experiences from the field. Coffee and tea available in room 120/121.

11.00 Welcome, introductions and programme overview

11.30 Robert Chambers (IDS): Farmer First: past, present, future?

12.30 Lunch and open space time

14.00 Scene-setting presentations (chairs: Ian Scoones and John Thompson)

- Andy Hall – UNU-Merit/LINK – Challenges to Strengthening Agricultural Innovation Systems: Where Do We Go From Here?
- Jacqueline Ashby\* – International Potato Center (CIP) – Fostering farmer first methodological innovation, organisational learning and change in international agricultural research

Plenary discussion of key themes and questions for the conference

15.30 Tea/coffee

'Wiki-Timeline' Exercise: Building on the Farmer First Revisited wiki-timeline, participants will be invited to reflect on past milestone events, publications and processes of change to think about the future challenges and opportunities for farmer-led innovation for agricultural R&D.

Sharing Session - posters, exhibits, videos, slide presentations etc. in the open space

17.30 Return to Old Ship Hotel, Brighton for drinks and dinner (including welcome by Melissa Leach, Director, STEPS Centre, Sussex University and a talk by Adewale Adekunle – Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa (FARA) – Agricultural research and development in Africa: new challenges for Farmer First approaches).

**Day 2 – Thursday, 13 December**

08.15 Depart Old Ship Hotel for IDS by coach

**Theme 1: Agricultural innovation systems – putting farmers first?**

09.00 Opening comments for Theme 1 session, followed by four discussants' presentations and plenary responses

10.15 Coffee break and start of group sessions until 12.30 lunch

This theme will explore the experiences of farmer participatory research and participatory technology development over the past twenty years, asking how farmers engage in the diverse systems of agricultural innovation found in the developing world. We want to ask – do new contexts for agriculture and R&D affect the way we should be thinking about farmer participation in agricultural research and development.

**a) Farmer participatory research and adaptive management [discussant – Adrienne Martin, Natural Resources Institute]**

This group session will examine a variety of experiences of participatory research and technology development in a range of settings, exploring the methods, practices and politics of such processes. Are these diverse experiences adding up to a new way of understanding research and innovation processes, or are these isolated, islands of success? What are the key features of new approaches to farmer participatory research and adaptive management? How have these evolved over the past 20 years, and what are the new trends?

- Edward Chuma – UZ, Zimbabwe – Participatory, interactive innovation and development experiences in Zimbabwe and South Africa [provisional title]
- Cecilia Turin – National Agricultural University, La Molina, Peru – Advocacy Coalitions to Build Participatory Processes in the Peruvian Altiplano: Increasing Human Capacities to Adapt to Changes
- Ravi Prabhu *et al.* – CIFOR – Action Research with Local Forest Users and Managers: Lessons from CIFOR's Research on Adaptive Collaborative Management
- Jean Claude Rubyogo and Louise Sperling\* – CIAT – Developing seed systems with and for the poor and marginalised: case of beans (*phaseolus vulgaris L*) in east, central and southern Africa
- Rob Tripp – ODI – Crop management innovation and the economics of attention
- Yan Zhaoli – ICIMOD – Co-management of Rangeland Resources in Hindu Kush–Himalayan Region: Involving Farmers in the Policy Process
- Todd Crane – Wageningen – If we put farmers first, where do the pastoralists go? Political ecology and participation in central Mali
- Norman Uphoff – CIIFAD – Farmer Innovations in the System of Rice Intensification (SRI)

**b) Engaging with markets [invited discussant – John Dixon, CIMMYT]**

Over the past 20 years, the contexts for agricultural research and development have changed significantly. Farmers must engage as entrepreneurs in complex, sometimes global, marketing systems, often without state support. Innovation systems appreciate the contexts way beyond the farm gate and engage with these changing market contexts. This group session will ask: do emerging innovation systems - involving new public and private actors and complex, often global, value chains - put farmers first? In such contexts how can farmers most effectively engage?

- Clive Lightfoot and Ueli Scheuermeier – Lightfoot Consulting – Testing an Operational Strategy for Learning How to Improve Small Holder Farmers' Links to Markets
- Julieta Roa – UPWARD – Developing Alternative Innovation Pathways based on the Market Chain Approach: the Case of Rootcrop Chips In Leyte, Philippines
- Dindo Campilan\* *et al.* – UPWARD – Beyond the Farmer and the Farm: UPWARD, User's Perspectives and Agricultural Livelihoods
- Jemimah Njuki *et al.* – CIAT – Empowering communities through market-led development: community agro-enterprise experiences from Uganda and Malawi
- Susan Kaaria *et al.* – CIAT – Enabling rural innovation in Africa: an approach for empowering smallholder farmers to access market opportunities for improved livelihoods
- Vincon Nyimbo – Agricultural Marketing Systems Development Programme, Tanzania – The First Mile: Making better market access sustainable for small farmers

**c) Science and the politics of knowledge [discussant – Melissa Leach, STEPS Centre, IDS]**

A central focus of debate over the last 20 years (and longer) has been the complex politics involved at the intersections of knowledge systems in processes of innovation. How do 'traditional' and 'modern' systems, as well as the complex hybrids, interact during innovation processes? How can knowledge production and its application be organised and made accountable? What approaches – top down or bottom up, hierarchical or networked, centralised or decentralised – might facilitate the emergence of 'pro-poor' science and technology? What are the implications for the design and support of innovation systems?

- Shambu Prasad – Xavier Institute of Management, Bhubaneswar (XIMB) – Encounters, Dialogues and Learning Alliances among Farmers, Scientists and Others in the System of Rice Intensification in India
- Anil Gupta – IIM-Ahmedabad – From Sink to Source: The Honey Bee Innovator Network Documents Indigenous Knowledge and Innovations in India
- Monty P. Jones\* and Sidi Sanyang\* – FARA – Promoting inclusion of civil society organizations (CSOs) in African Agricultural Research and Development
- Kerry Albright – NR International – Research into Use: Linking scientists and users in innovation systems
- Oscar Ortiz *et al.* – CIP – Participatory research on potato-related innovation systems in Bolivia, Ethiopia, Peru and Uganda
- Virginia Nazarea – University of Georgia – A Map of Her Own: Accessing the Imagined, Imagining the Unaccessed
- Norman Uphoff – CIIFAD – The System of Rice Intensification (SRI) as a System of Agricultural Innovation

**d) Assessing outcomes: participatory learning and impact assessment [discussant – María Fernández, Center for the Integration of Research and Action at the University of Chapel Hill in North Carolina]**

There has been much debate over the past 20 years about how different modes of research effort deliver or don't. How do we know that participatory approaches deliver results of benefit to the goals of poverty reduction and economic growth? How are such assessments framed, and how are such appraisals designed? What indicators are appropriate, and how can unlike processes be effectively evaluated? These fundamental methodological questions are at the heart of the debate about the assessment of outcomes and central to wider policy debates about the value – or otherwise – of 'farmer first' approaches. This session will review different experiences, and identify some of the lessons learned, as well as challenges for the future.

- Dawit Abebe *et al.* – Tufts, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia – Participatory impact assessment of pastoral development in Ethiopia.
- Boru Douthwaite and Martin Gummert – CIAT and IRRI – Learning Selection Revisited
- Boru Douthwaite – CIAT – Participatory Impact Pathways Analysis
- Irene Guijt – Learning by Design – Rethinking monitoring for collective learning in rural resource management
- Adrienne Martin – Natural Resources Institute – So what difference does it make? - assessing the outcomes and impacts of farmer participatory research.
- Pascal Sanginga\* – CIAT/IDRC – Tracking outcomes of participatory policy learning and action research: Methodological issues and empirical evidence from participatory bylaw reforms in Uganda

12.30 Lunch

13.30 Theme 1 Brief rapporteurs' feedback

**Theme 2: Organising agricultural research and development for the 21st century**

14.30 Theme 2: 3 discussant's presentations and plenary responses

15.30 Tea/coffee, and move to group sessions

This theme will look at the organisation of agricultural research and development, and the challenges of farmer participation on large scales in often highly conventional organisations. Experiences from the CGIAR centres, NARES (National Agricultural Research and Extension Systems) and the private sector will be explored, alongside more bottom-up initiatives emerging from farmer organisations and unions. In addition experiences of new, hybrid organisational arrangements, involving, for example, partnerships between public and private sectors or integrated approaches involving farmers as well as technicians (as in farmer field schools) will be explored. The theme will ask whether the current institutional and organisational framework – for research, extension and agricultural education – really does put farmers first.

**a) Private-public linkages [discussant: Rasheed Sulaiman V, Director, Centre for Research on Innovation and Science Policy (CRISP)]**

There has been much talk about the potentials for positive synergies between the public and private sectors in agricultural research and development. New institutional arrangements have emerged, including brokering organisations such as the African Agricultural Technology Foundation, as well as private philanthropy and development programmes associated in different ways with large multinational companies, such as the Syngenta Foundation or Monsanto's smallholder programme. Going beyond the policy hype, this group session will examine these experiences, asking whether such institutional and organisational innovations represent a new way forward for research and development. Key questions will include: how are public-private interactions constructed, and what are the accountability mechanisms involved? How do farmers get involved in priority setting and technology development and its extension?

- Dominic Glover – IDS – Farmer participation in private sector agricultural extension services and innovation systems: the case of Monsanto in India
- Bino Témé\* *et al.* – Institut d'Economie Rurale, Mali – De la création d'une station de recherche au renforcement des capacités des producteurs: L'expérience de la Fondation Syngenta au Mali [in French]
- Gospel Omanyia – AATF, Nairobi – A Bridge for Delivering Innovations to Smallholder Farmers in Africa
- S. Sloan\* and Andy Peters – GALVmed – Protecting Livestock - Saving Human Life
- David Spielman\* *et al.* – IFPRI – Public-private partnerships and developing-country agriculture: evidence from the international agricultural research system

**b) What is the future of extension? [discussant: Rob Tripp, Overseas Development Institute]**

Debates about extension have waned in recent years, mirroring the decline of public, state-funded extension systems modelled very often on the classic Training and Visit model. While recognising the limits of these traditional approaches to extension, what has replaced them? Have informal, networked farmer-to-farmer models taken over? Has the private sector stepped into the gap? Or have new forms of organisational model emerged, based on such experiences as 'farmer field schools' or participatory farmer extension? This session will evaluate some of these new innovations in rural extension and define the challenges for the future, given the new contexts for extension systems today.

- Amanuel Assefa – AgriService Ethiopia – Farmer-led innovation: Experiences and challenges in Ethiopia
- Qi Gubo *et al.* – College of Humanities and Development, China Agricultural University – Institutionalizing Farmer-Centered Research Approach (FCRA) in China
- Paul Van Mele – WARDA – The Role of International Agricultural Research Centres in strengthening rural extension
- Hlamalani Ngwenya and Jürgen Hagmann – PICO South Africa and TAD Group, Wageningen University – Facilitation for change: Triggering emancipation and innovation in rural communities in South Africa
- Richard Ewbank\* *et al.* – FARM-Africa – Farmer Participatory Research in Northern Tanzania

- Niels Röling and Janice Jiggins\* – Wageningen Agricultural University – Making trans-disciplinary science work for resource-poor farmers
- Ahmad Salahuddin *et al.* – IRRI, Bangladesh – Values in agricultural research and development management: rhetoric and practice
- Yunita Winarto – University of Indonesia – ‘Bull’ vs. ‘Tiger’: Can the bull and the tiger work collaboratively? A reflection on farmer first in Indonesia

**c) Creating demand and increasing accountability: the role of farmers’ organisations [discussant: Ann Waters–Bayer, ETC Foundation/PROLINNOVA]**

A central requirement of any ‘farmer first’ approach to agricultural research and development is to generate effective demand on R&D, marketing and policy systems by the users themselves. To be meaningful, participation cannot be an optional add-on, funded by donor or NGO projects, but needs to be central to the politics of priority setting, decision-making and fund allocation. But farmers, particularly more marginalised groups, are notoriously poor at articulating such voices in market, political and policy processes. This session will look at the experiences of farmers’ and producers’ organisations in different parts of the developing world, asking can such organisations make farmers’ voices count in agricultural R&D, and what are the conditions for making this effective.

- Khamarunga Banda\* - National African Farmers Union of South Africa (NAFU SA)– Experiences of the African Alliance of sub-regional Farmer Organisations.
- Beatriz del Rosario – International Federation of Agricultural Producers (IFAP) Philippines – Fostering farmer–scientist research collaboration on improving crop productivity and profitability – the IFAP perspective
- Assetou Kanouté – ADAF/Gallé, Mali – Promoting Farmer Experimentation and Innovation to Improve Food Security and Natural Resource Conservation in the Sahel (Profeis): Case Of Mali
- Nduati Kariuki\* – Kenya National Federation of Agricultural Producers (KENFAP) – Farmer First Revisited: Farmer-centred research
- Michael Kibue – Kikasha Livestock (Beef) Association, Kenya – Learning to Set Up a Fair Trade Livestock Marketing Chain from Massai Pastoralists to Consumers in Nairobi, Kenya
- Elizabeth Vargas and William Burgoa\* – CIPCA – Farmers’ participation in policy advocacy processes: Reviewing two cases from Bolivia

17.30 Rapporteurs’ quick feedback

18.00 Bus to Old Ship Hotel and restaurant in Brighton

**Day 3 – Friday, 14 December**

8.30 Depart from Old Ship Hotel, Brighton to IDS

9.00 Where have we got to? First thoughts on key emerging issues (Ian Scoones/John Thompson)

9.30 Four discussants' presentations and plenary responses

10.30 Coffee break and start of group sessions to lunch (12:30)

**Theme 3: Methodological innovation, personal and organisational change: looking to the future**

A central feature of the 'farmer first' approaches of the past 20 years has been methodological innovation. This has resulted in a vast expansion of the array of tools, techniques and experiments available for research and development in agriculture, with a diversity of experiences from across the world. But a key question has been how has methodological innovation interacted with personal and organisational change? What has allowed things to happen, and what has acted to close things down? This session will explore some of these experiences in contrasting settings. As with the earlier sessions, this theme will explore particular personal and organisational experiences, drawing out broader lessons for the future.

**a) Institutionalising participation in large, public R&D organisations [discussant, Shambu Prasad, Xavier Institute of Management, Bhubaneswar (XIMB)]**

This session will focus on a series of stories of change (and sometimes lack of it) in large research and development organisations, including a number of CGIAR Centres as well as national programmes. The session will ask, inter alia: what has prompted change, and what has prevented it in different settings? How important has been the focus on methodological innovation for opening up spaces for change? What have been the factors that have closed things down at particular moments? How is 'participation in innovation systems understood in different organisational settings? Who have been the individual (and collective) champions of change, and what has allowed them to be successful (or not), at different moments? By taking a personal and historical approach, reflecting on experiences over the past 20 years, this session aims to draw lessons for the future, asking what are the core institutional and organisational challenges for putting farmers first in agricultural research and development today.

- John Dixon – CIMMYT – Institutionalising approaches to farmer participation in FAO and CIMMYT [provisional title]
- Ruth Meinzen-Dick\* – IFPRI/CAPRI – Institutionalising the Study of Institutions in Agricultural Research: Reflections on the CGIAR Systemwide Program on Collective Action and Property Rights (CAPRI)
- Dannie Romney – CABI – New approaches to research – experiences from research organisations
- Rasheed Sulaiman\* – CRISP – Farmer first or still last? Uneven institutional development in the Indian agricultural innovation system
- John Witcombe *et al.* – CAZS-NR, University of Wales, Bangor – Client-oriented breeding and seed supply

- Jamie Watts and Douglas Horton\* – ILAC – Institutional Learning and Change: An initiative to promote greater impact through agricultural research for poverty alleviation
- Li Xiaoyun *et al.* – Chinese Agricultural University – Pro-smallholders' Agricultural Science And Technology Policies in China

**b) Building networks and partnerships for change: power and relationships [discussant: Susan Kaaria, CIAT Enabling Rural Innovation]**

Whether among the international public research system (e.g. the CGIAR), among NGO groups or among public-private initiatives, much recent focus has been on notions of partnership and network building - to share ideas, information and practices, as well as influence change. But what do networks and partnerships mean in practice? What power dynamics are key to such relationships? Do they enable new perspectives to be generated and shared, or are they usually marginalised from the more organised, structured and top-down processes which remain at the core? Building on yesterday's session on farmer organisations, and drawing on a variety of experiences from around the world, this session will ask how productive alliances can be built with technology users and producers that allow diverse, and sometimes contrasting, perspectives from farmers to have an influence on mainstream innovation systems.

- Maria Arce – Practical Action – Food sovereignty: a framework centred on the farmers [provisional title]
- Awa Faly Ba – IED Afrique – Communicating farmers' knowledge: AGRIDAPE and PROFEIS experiences
- Scott Killough – World Neighbours – Experiences of World Neighbours in fostering participatory agricultural development [provisional title]
- Oliver Oliveros\* – DURAS Project – Challenges of strengthening the involvement of stakeholders in innovation and research: the DURAS experience
- Lydia Sasu – Development Action Association (DAA), Ghana – ARD: Evidence In Contributing to the Achievement of the MDGs – Eradicating extreme hunger and poverty; promoting gender equality and empowering women – Poster Exhibition – local fish storage
- Edith van Walsum – ILEIA – Learning to value LEISA: Experiences in global knowledge networking for Low External Input Sustainable Agriculture
- Ann Waters-Bayer *et al.* – Prolinnova – PROLINNOVA: Building Partnerships to Promote Local Innovation Processes
- Bernard Triomphe – CIRAD – How may research take part in innovation processes involving multi-stakeholder partnerships? Lessons, challenges and opportunities
- Anil Gupta – Honey Bee Network – Through the Doors Within: Network, Institutions and Movement
- Paul Richards – TAD, Wageningen University – Farmers First? Towards a neural network perspective on farmer seed systems

**c) New professionals: changing agricultural education systems [discussant, Niels Röling, Wageningen Agricultural University]**

At the core of the challenge to put farmers first in agricultural research and development is challenging the attitudes, behaviours and practices of professionals, whether researchers, extensionists or policymakers. This has been long recognised, but much of the debate has shied away from tackling how to re-imagine educational systems for agriculture. These too often

remain stuck in linear, top-down notions of technology transfer and diffusion that act to undermine efforts to encourage a more participatory perspective. This session will review some experiences – their successes and failures – in mainstreaming participatory approaches in formal, often highly conservative, educational systems.

- Andy Catley\* – Tufts, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia – From marginal to normative: institutionalizing participatory epidemiology
- Jürgen Hagmann *et al.* – PICOTEAM – Learning to make Change: Developing Innovation & Change Competence in African Universities
- Jethro Petit and Peter Taylor\* – IDS – Participation, learning and agricultural education [provisional title]
- Robert Rhoades – University of Georgia – Participation, Paternalism and Practicality: Reconciling Sustainability Science and Indigenous Agendas
- Li Xiaoyun *et al.* – Chinese Agricultural University – China's higher education policy reform in practice: rejuvenating rural development studies.

12.30 Lunch

13.30 Theme 3 rapporteurs' feedback followed by a final plenary discussion

- Revisit 'wiki' timeline – final reflections on new drivers and directions
- Open plenary discussion on key issues, challenges and ways forward

15.30 Tea/coffee

16.00 Panel Session: reflections from different perspectives – identifying next steps

17.00 Closing remarks – Robert Chambers, Ian Scoones and John Thompson

17.30 Wine and nibbles – Room 221

18.30 Coach back to Brighton